

MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN
THE GRADUATE PROGRAMS

MFATHESIS

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MFA THESIS

- I April 18 - 26
- II April 30 - May 7
- III May 13 - 21

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INTRODUCTION

GO FISH,

ANN WILSON LLOYD

The art world may be daunting but it's the artist's world that matters. To fathom it, I recommend *Gould's Book of Fish*¹, a rich fable set in an island penal colony. A tale of how art transforms the maker, a convict named Gould is so obsessed with painting the fish that wash in and out of his sea-level cell that he eventually becomes one and slips away. Though ostensibly free, he finds he's caught up in something beyond himself. Process trumps fate—Gould is remade by relentless making.

¹ *Gould's Book of Fish*, by Richard Flanagan, was published in 2001

In the more mundane confines of the studio, or just inside one's head, such magical moments can likewise occur. The transformative stage of making is one where process, physical or conceptual or both, nudges ego aside and slips behind the wheel. Artists strive to describe these moments of creative nirvana. Mark di Suvero once said it was like "running across the rocks with my eyes closed."² John Steinbeck must have been alluding to something similar when, in *The Grapes of Wrath*, he wrote: "Man, unlike any other thing organic or inorganic in the universe, grows beyond his work, walks up the stairs of his concepts, emerges ahead of his accomplishments." Such a state has also been called a beneficent form of limerence, or being lost in the transcendent moment, akin to an all-consuming passion, or religious ecstasy, where the self is negated and a different self is waiting on the other side. Better than sex, in other words.

² Quote by Mark di Suvero is from an artist interview with the author in 1990

As a critic, I rarely get to use the words "student" and "rigor" in the same sentence, but at MassArt there is perennial evidence of the drive, skill, and courage that indicate a rigorous foundation. Such a preparation is essential for sorting out the questions recurring throughout an artist's life: Is it the art world or the artist's world that beckons? How does one's own voice rise above the fray? Deflecting careerist noise is tough, but work – the process – keeps one focused, even if the words "work" and "focus" are terms far too concrete for the vacuum of ideas one may feel at any given moment.

Returning to the prison metaphor, nothing is more terrifying than finding oneself in the lonely cell of No Ideas. Just as confining (albeit more companionable) is the cellblock of Ideas du Jour. Ultimately, ideas matter less than doggedness. As one veteran artist/teacher tells his students, "If you go to your studio two hours a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year, you can become very good artists."

Tales of the art world are often either cautionary, cynical exposés, or explications of cultural commerce. Tales of the artist's world can be meta-fictional, visionary, parodies of Faustian commerce. The tales of the artists in this exhibition are in the works, literally and figuratively, as they will continue to be. Process itself is relentless, even the process of negotiating outer and inner worlds.

As Gould's reborn, fishy persona says near the end of his story, "For out there, only just beyond our vision, the net is waiting for us all, ever ready to trap & then rise with us tangled within, fins flailing, bodies futilely thrashing, heading to who knows what chaotic destiny." The works in this exhibition were netted from a similar realm of chaos. No longer mere ideas, they are now doubtless hard at work, remaking their makers.

ANN WILSON LLOYD is the Boston Corresponding Editor for *Art in America*. She has written about art for *The New York Times*, *Atlantic*, *Aperture*, and *Smithsonian*, among others.

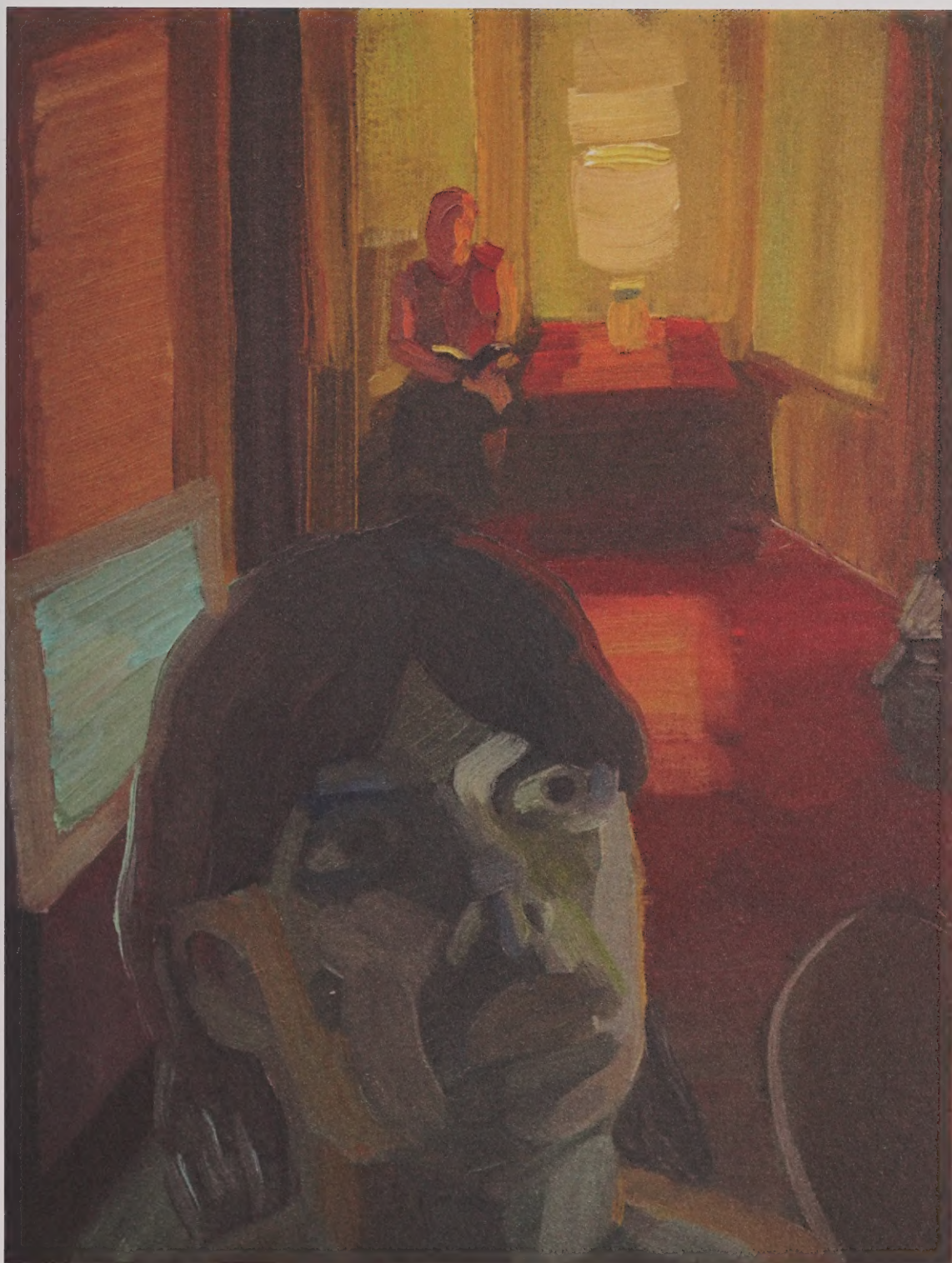
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Scott T Barry *Starting the day*, oil on canvas, 35" x 35", 2011



Scott T Barry *Sight*, oil on canvas, 12" x 18", 2011

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Erin Jagneaux *Untitled*, etching, 8.5" x 11", 2011

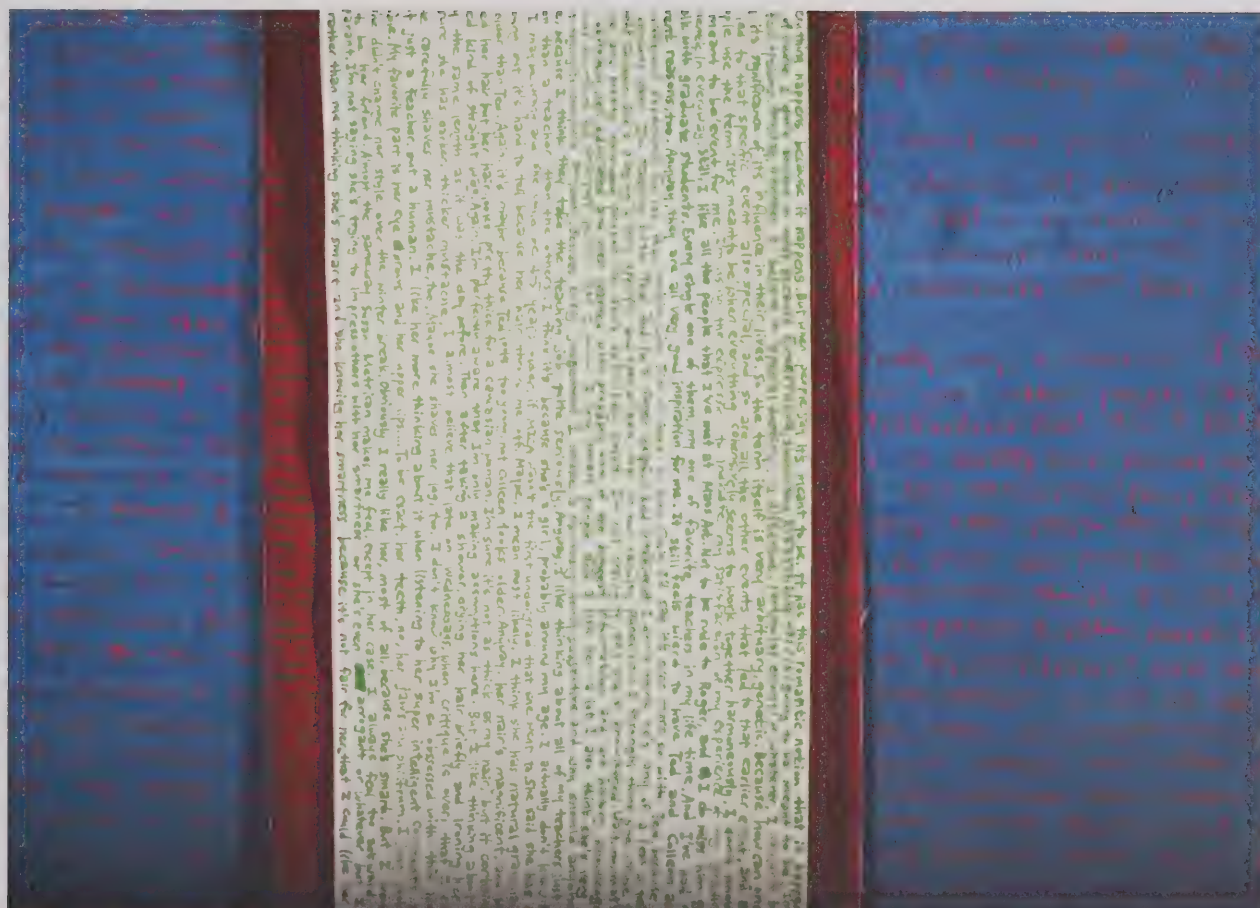
Erin Jagneaux *Untitled*, graphite on masonite, 2' x 4', 2010



Erin Jagneaux *Untitled*, woodblock print, 2' x 3', 2010



Hounyeh Kim *Mission Possible*, mixed media on paper, 56" x 64", 2010



Hounyeh Kim detail: *In*, mixed media on paper, size: vary, 2011
 Hounyeh Kim *In*, mixed media on paper, vary, 2011

AMANDA CASE MILLIS

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"Painting has the remarkable ability to realize the intangible. There are myriad tools at my disposal: my fingers, a sable brush, a bristle brush, a rough rag, a smooth cloth, a sanding disc, a palette knife and more. I consider the speed at which I move the paint, the thickness of the paint, its opacity or transparency. I consider what is obscured and what is revealed in the image."

Large format photography affords me another way of framing and recording what I see in the world. The camera's mechanical nature and remove from the hand provide a counterpoint to my painting practice. Looking through a view camera ground glass - with its image upside-down and backwards - helps me think more openly about abstraction in my paintings."

The act of painting is a physical one, a record of responses culminating in a singular image. Yet, great paintings transcend their physical reality. I am awed and humbled when I stand before a Rembrandt or Rothko. Sometimes, when I am curious instead of willful, the painting looks back in a way I couldn't have known, even though it was through my touch that it came to be."



Amanda Case Millis *Untitled*, Oil on Canvas, 60" x 72", 2011

JAMES OVID MUSTIN III

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James Ovid Mustin III *Untitled #1*, 3 plate color etching, 9" x 9", 2011

James Ovid Mustin III *Untitled #2*, 3 plate color etching, 9" x 9", 2011

James Ovid Mustin III *Untitled #3*, 3 plate color etching, 9" x 9", 2011

James Ovid Mustin III *Untitled #4*, 3 plate color etching, 9" x 9", 2011

*"Intellectual rhetoric is insignificant, because
talk has little to do with procedure."*



James Ovid Mustin III *Untitled #5*, 3 plate color etching, 9" x 9", 2011
 James Ovid Mustin III *Untitled #6*, 3 plate color etching, 9" x 9", 2011
 James Ovid Mustin III *Untitled #7*, 3 plate color etching, 9" x 9", 2011
 James Ovid Mustin III *Untitled #8*, 3 plate color etching, 9" x 9", 2011

KARA WAXMAN

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Kara Waxman *Birthday*, Acrylic paint on panel, 20" x 16", 2010



Kara Waxman *Piano Lesson (Instruments)*, Mixed media (weaving, embroidery), 6.25" x 8.25", 2010

PAULINA PERLWITZ

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"There was a long hallway and at the end I saw a mirror. It was hinged to its support, and I saw it was double sided, as it turned over itself, into itself. Its rotation was led by an unseen force, a gale wind that was somehow steady and peaceful in its thrust. Reflections of nothing, or maybe there was something I couldn't see. I find myself there often, into that place of rotation and bafflement, even. A lack a clarity. A knowingness towards duality. Then in the daytime, still that misunderstanding of space. Disoriented in how ultimately "here" we are, in the today-ness of today. Trying to find pacing with the rhythm."



Paulina Perlwitz *Boxes*, acrylic and oil on canvas, 9.5" x 12", 2010

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Leah Gadd *triangle*, 2010
 Leah Gadd *i will wait for you*, 2010

HELEN GLADYSHEVA

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"My path to arts has been from the world of scientific evidence and facts to the world that exposes feelings and breaks borders between real and unreal. My primary area is figurative sculpture.

The core of the present work is the examination of relationships with my children, family and relatives. This permeates the picture with certain emotions and evolutionary foundation. Sometimes, I look at myself and feel I was always a grown up woman, yet the little girl that once was me is still out there. I try to meet this girl in my work and introduce her to my children. My work is a journey into the depths of inner space."



Helen Gladysheva 01 *The Sign*, plaster, life size, 2010

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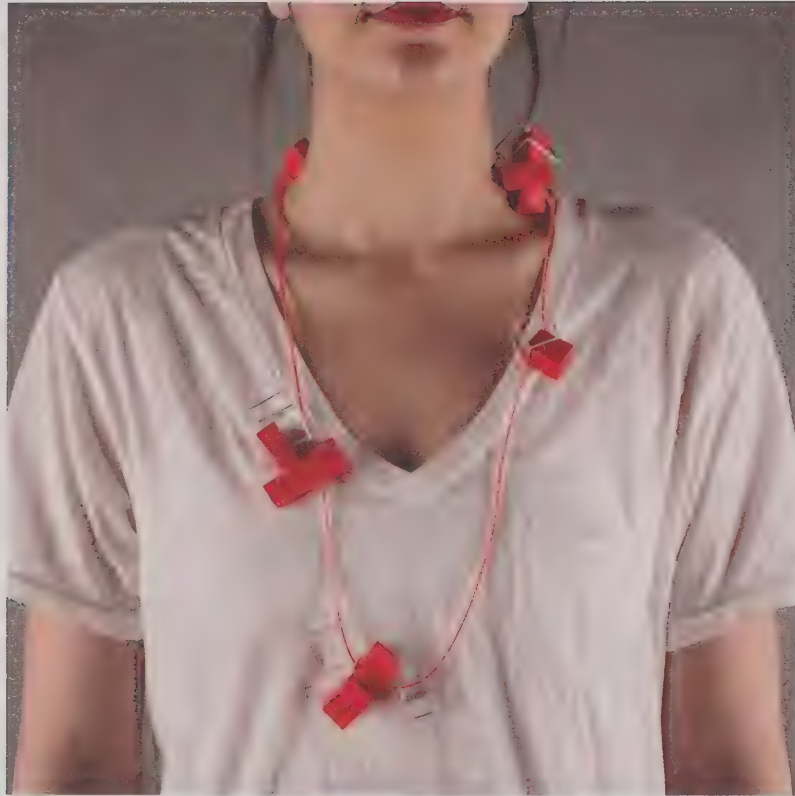




Nicholas Hochstetler *Old Enemy. New Victim: Bears*, Foam, Steel, Rubber, Dirt And Acrylic, 120" x 84" x 26", 2010

BANGHEE LEE

MFA 3D



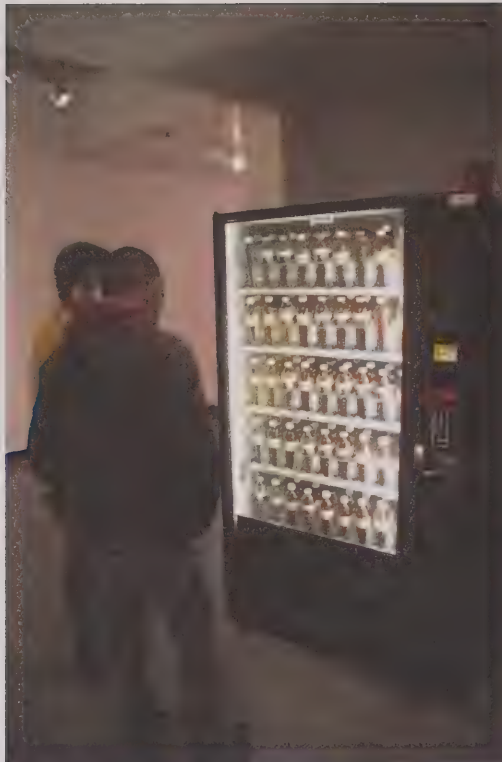


CAITLIN NESBIT

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"Being raised near the ocean on Cape Cod, I've spent endless hours observing the rich variety of textures created by water. As both an artist and an activist, I channel my research toward improving water quality through objects that signify environmental remediation. The concepts of filtration, permeability, and movement are at the core of my work, which are clarified by material choices and working processes."

Caitlin Nesbit *Refreshing Natural FensWater*, installation view, Vending machine, water samples in recycled bottles, labels, dimensions variable, 2010.

Caitlin Nesbit *Buoy, Rope, reed, and styrofoam*, dimensions variable, 2010



Caitlin Nesbit *Refreshing Natural FensWater*, detail,
Vending machine, water samples in recycled bottles, labels, dimensions variable, 2010.

GARET ZOOK

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"I am inspired by overexposed symbolism originating from the grandeur of American culture: i.e. family hierarchical structures and idol-based relationships, propaganda, self-proclamation and infomercials. I hyper-extend the satiric nature of idealist America, bringing forth a grotesque, almost sinister undertone. By using metal, wood, foam and rubber, figures and environments are created which explore the deformation and re-creation of normalcy in a garish and vivacious manner. "



Gareth Zook *Three Coalesced*, Steel Armature and foam 3.5' x 8.5', 2010

ALISON KOTIN

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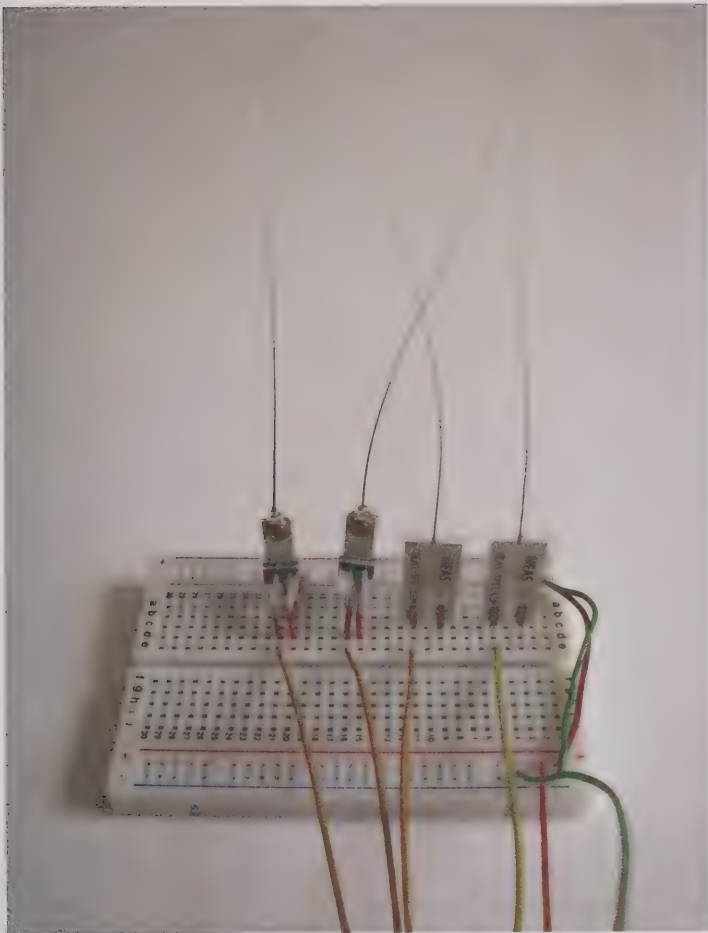


"To explore the creative potential of interaction with dynamic media, I make participatory works that spark collaborative, unscripted performance and play. By creating tactile, motion-powered digital interfaces modeled on musical instruments, I hope to encourage a spirit of curiosity and experimentation, leading participants to reflect on the process of creation as they perform. These open-ended, interactive situations favor chance and ambiguity, adding a layer of metaphor or unexpected responsiveness to familiar objects and places.

In considering the nature of experience and performance, I gather lessons from the history of performance art, avant-garde musical composition, and studio arts pedagogy. Historically, 'relational' performative artworks have sought to foster community and creativity by making spectators an integral part of a performance piece as it unfolds towards completion. Modern dynamic media objects have the potential to create experiences and outputs that are variable, personalized, and evolving over time, redefining the author's role and blurring the boundary between 'user' and 'designer'.

To create Whisker Organ, I have connected a group of cat whiskers to piezoelectric touch/ vibration sensors, which trigger a set of notes sung by a choir when the whiskers are plucked or stroked by audience members. Whisker Organ is foremost a project about touch, interaction, and context. The Whisker Organ apparatus and interface are designed to draw maximum attention to the tiniest possible interaction: a fingertip brushes a cat's whisker, triggering an explosion of sound. The use of notes produced by a choir allows me to continue my exploration of the human voice as the content for a digital "instrument." I am also interested in the experiential effect of connecting massed human voices to a cat's whisker, juxtaposing and joining two organic but otherwise unconnected references. Out of context, the whiskers lose their familiarity and become elegant and mysterious objects which are, like any body part separated from its owner, inescapably creepy to see and touch. I hope to evoke in users both a frisson of physical discomfort, and a desire to prolong the interaction, and to experiment with the instrument as a compositional tool."

Thanks to: Fred Wolflink, Alex Wang, Walter Chapin and the Oriana Consort, Jennifer Webb, Jan Kubasiewicz, DMI.



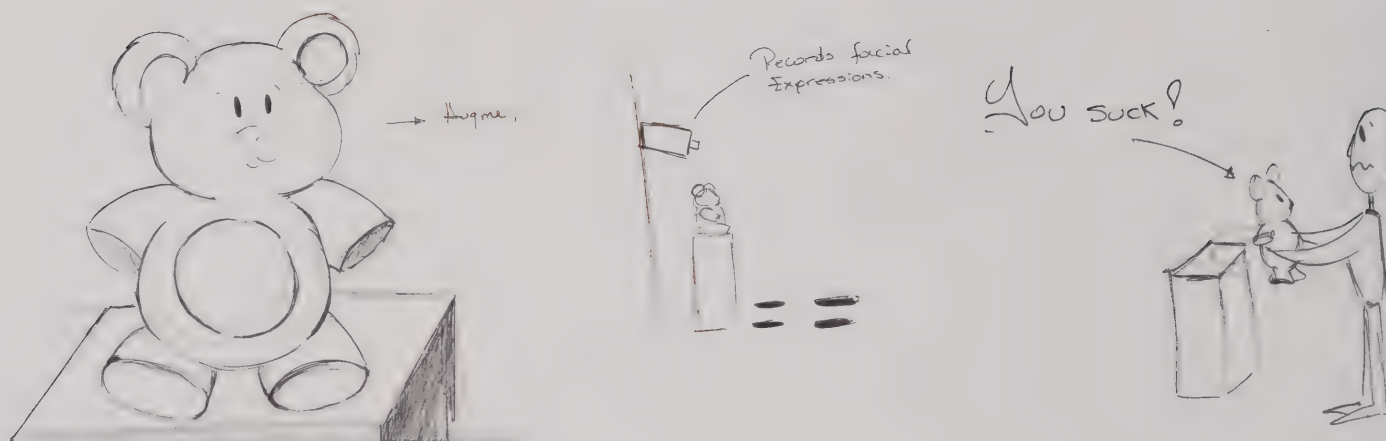
Alison Kotin Whisker Organ: Circuitry, Piezoelectric touch sensors and cats' whiskers, 2011
 Alison Kotin Whisker Organ, Piezoelectric touch sensors, cats' whiskers, electronics, 2011

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Teddy bear = the instigator

Outward Aggression and Integration of Human Characteristics with Inanimate Objects.

"Objects help me communicate in a way I wouldn't be able to otherwise. They become a channel that allows me to express the frustration I feel from my daily interactions with people. I used a teddy bear in this project, a gentle, childhood object who invites people to interact with friendly words and compliments, and then delivers a nasty response to keep viewers 'on their toes' in his own words. The personality of the teddy bear came from the disillusionment I experienced as an undergraduate with a teacher. When I first met this person, I assumed he was gentle and understanding based on his physical appearance. To my surprise, he was far from being a gentle human being; his behavior was judgmental and cruel. The purpose of the teddy bear mission is to go on in life, confusing and testing people. There is nothing sweet about his behavior. On the contrary, since he is in contact with his anger he doesn't hesitate to release it and feels joy by seeing people being embarrassed in public."



Tania Ostorga *Teddy bear = The instigator*, 12" x 7" , 2010
 Tania Ostorga *Teddy bear = The instigator*, 12" x 7" , 2010

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cyberSurrealism: performance art, presence and the liminal object

"Modern day people live in 'betweenSpace' – a transitional point in time and space that is located somewhere between our new-found dataSpace and the natural world. We interpret sensations and messages from a myriad of mediatypes (both organic and virtual) on a continuous basis. A sense of 'texture' – perhaps a 'surface spirit' – is lost when moving from the natural|organic to the virtual|artificial domains. More and more, our relationship to the world and the people we meet involves informational mediation through a strange involvement with 'the invisible other' in society – a sort of shadow presence of devices, technology, and information.

My work explores this 'betweenSpace' by creating playful, performative, cyberSurreal experiences for the user-participant. Using both pretend and prototyped devices, I touch and tickle the subtle boundaries of our everShifting social conventions as increasingly influenced, stretched and blurred over time by the introduction of new inventions into our technoHumanic ecosystem.

I fabricate and utilize entire systems of tools (ranging in style and media of delivery) to discover the boundaries and report back my findings to the fictional Bureau of cyberSurreal Investigation. The information I glean produces controversial discourse – revealing areas of unintended usage and potential exploitation points in the found systems I am testing 'out there' in the world. My personal interest in the build up and release of psychoSocial tensions drives my first-person commentary based on qualitative data collection – hopefully resulting in humorous insight into our supposed progress as a society in The Information Age."



Iou suSi *moneyShot Bouquet*, Medium: found wooden frame, fake craft flowers, IR Sensor, Senso Motor, Arduino microprocessor, windshield washer pump, and water, 36" x 48", 2010

DAVID TAMES

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"Cinematic storytelling is my key to the interpretation of reality, my looking glass into the world. I began working in film as a cinematographer, using light, composition, and motion to express, animate, and give substance to the fictional world created by writers and directors I collaborated with. For several years I worked in a variety of roles on several interactive narrative and documentary projects including The East Village (1996), among the first web-based entertainment web sites incorporating a mix of text, photography, and video to tell interactive stories. In recent years my work has taken a turn, directing documentary films about people and their creative work.

I believe cinema can be a vehicle for revealing personality, and I choose my subjects for the creative and generous sparks within them. I see the interview (in its many forms and variations) as a way to bear witness to a life lived or a life unfolding. This perspective is reflected in both the content and form of my work. My interest in documentary is aptly described by the Setswana proverb, 'Motho ke motho ka batho' (a person is a person through others). In Remembering John Marshall (2006, in collaboration with Alice Apley) I recall the life and work of a filmmaker, anthropologist, and activist through the words of close friends and collaborators. One of Marshall's students recalls a moment when Marshall took him aside, grabbed him by the arm, and said, 'You want to come away from a film feeling like you've met someone.' In Smile Boston Project (2007) I follow Bren Bataclan, an emerging artist who finds that his devotion to the community and to his work is proportionally rewarded by commissions, shows, and sales.

My MFA thesis installation, This Place in a Space, takes me in a new direction, exploring the complexity of documenting ephemeral, site-specific art. The project began with the raw material of documenting (with video, sound, writing, and photographs) the 2010 Bumpkin Island Art Encampment. Following the encampment I gathered reflective audio interviews with the artists and curators. Through a series of experiments with the materials, the vision for an installation emerged. My choice to create an installation is a response to my disillusionment with making screen-based interactive narrative and documentary works. My process has led me through an exploration of ways of documenting place by shaping the contours of the gallery space, creating new insides and outsides as visitors moves through the space. In previous documentary work I was always an observer, however, with This Place in a Space I take I've added the role of participant, leading to a new form of embodiment layered through participant reflections on the experience, the site-specific art works, and the homesteading experience, embodying a place (Bumpkin Island), and responding to it and creating new layers of meaning for gallery visitors to discover."



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Tara Merenda Nelson *Catharsis* , a cinematic installation for light and air, 2009

"I make art that investigates the psychological space of creativity in search of the imagination. How does our sensory experience of the world work with our memories, expectations, ideas and emotions to create meaning? I am motivated by the study of human perception as both the filter through which we experience the world, and the mechanism that makes it meaningful."

ANDRES ZUNIGA

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"I am interested in environments created by humans, in all their greatness and misery, from the perfection of a skyscraper silhouette to the distortions that we find in reflections or to the misery of a trash dump. I try to show the movement of the city from the perspective of the ephemeral subject. I also try to find unique locations that show the city by reflecting the city itself on their surfaces. As a similarity to abstract work, the influence of poetry forms and painting in the rhythm and patterns in my city symphonies is very important in finding the symphony pace."

In my videos the camera work is different from the camera work in narrative cinema since I have broader options for camera work that expand its possibilities."



Andres Zuniga *Ephemerals*, Still 2, HD, 8.5" x 11" (2550px x 3300px)

ELIZABETH ATTERBURY

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Elizabeth Atterbury *Green Screen*, Chromogenic print, 16" x 20", 2011



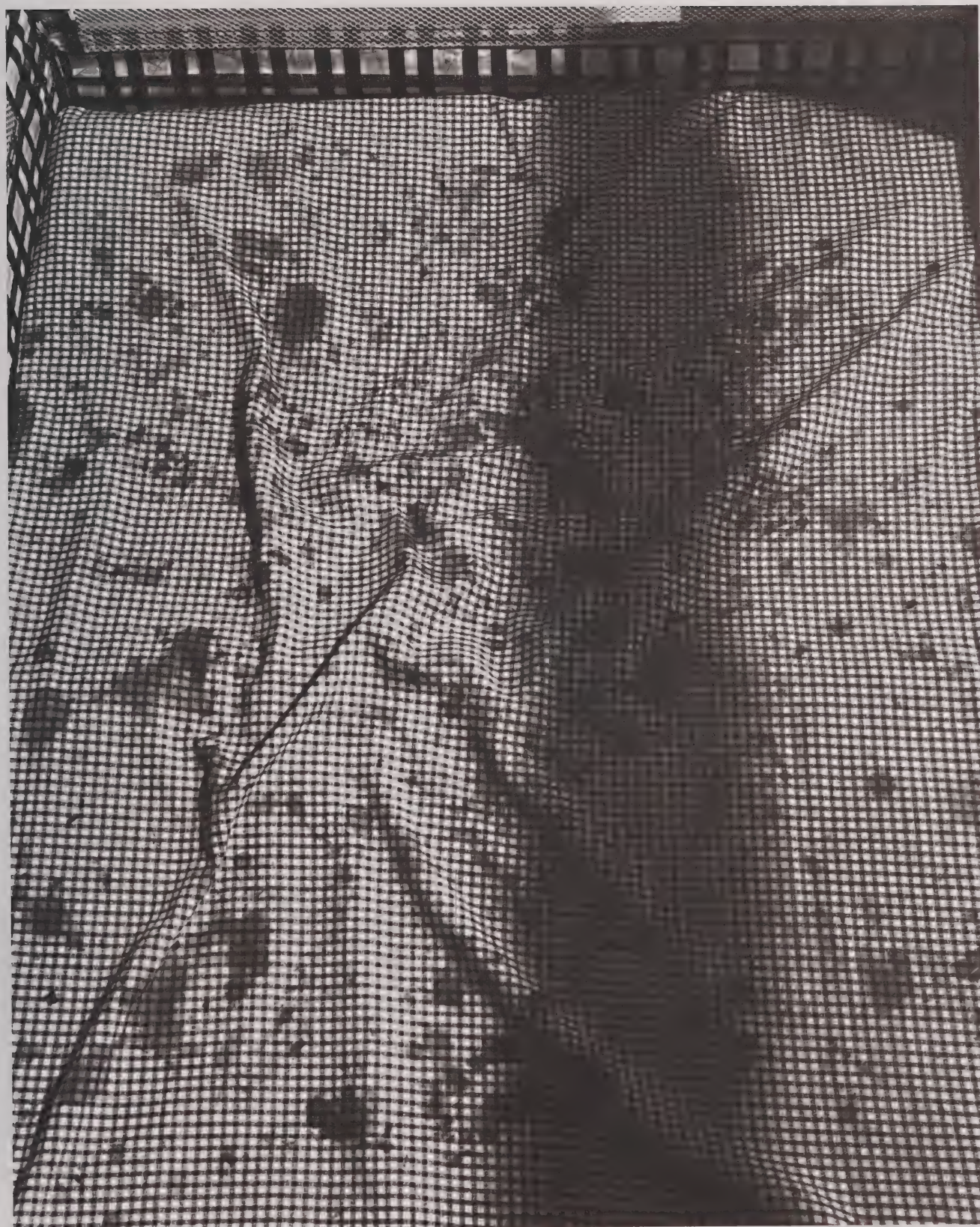
Elizabeth Atterbury *Pine Warbler*, Erased lithograph, 12" x 9", 2011

DANIEL DAVIS

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Daniel E. Davis Legos, 20" x 24" Silver Gelatin Print, 2010



ALEXANDER HARDING

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Alexander Harding *Light Reflecting Off Two Mirrors*, Film Negative, Archival Inkjet Print, 24" x 30", 2010



| PHOTOGRAPHY |

Alexander Harding *Particles 4*, Film Negative, Archival Inkjet Print, 40" x 50", 2011

MEGAN LEDBETTER

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"Megan Ledbetter was born in Jackson, MS and raised in the good state of Tennessee. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Anthropology from Auburn University. Megan then became an Au Pair in Milan, Italy for two lovely little boys. Upon returning home she pursued Photography at both Chattanooga State Technical Community College (Continuing Education) and East Tennessee State University (Bachelor of Fine Arts). Currently she is pursuing a Master of Fine Arts in Photography from Massachusetts College of Art and Design."

Megan Ledbetter Untitled from the "Loveland/Hateland" series, Silver Gelatin Prints 20" x 24"



| PHOTOGRAPHY |

Megan Ledbetter *Untitled* from the "Loveland/Hateland" series, Silver Gelatin Prints 20" x 24"

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Ashley McDowell *Melissa on Mom's Bed*, Inkjet Print, 2010

Ashley McDowell *Photo Album*, Inkjet Print, 2010



| PHOTOGRAPHY |

Ashley McDowell *Dad's Finger*, Inkjet Print, 2010

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Robert Watermeyer *Rubbish Picker, Worcester*



| PHOTOGRAPHY |

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Ashley Bell Clark *Cock Rock*, silver gelatin print, 20" x 24", 2011



Ashley Bell Clark still from video installation "*Plant Subjects*", three channel video installation, dimensions variable, 2011

MARISSA E GEORGIU

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Marissa E Georgiou *Untitled*, Tower Lobby Installation, Mylar, Dimensions Variable, 2010

Marissa E Georgiou *What's Yours is Mine*, Performance with Ex-Boyfriend's Socks, Dimensions Variable 2009-2011



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"I analyze my environment from the perspectives of five sisters living together on the 29th farm. The women who live here are the physical presence of my work, and my body and my voice are the physical presence of these women. Moving from writing, to speaking, to performing, and painting, I document a journey of being lost and questions of ritual, sisterhood, and faith. Here, patience meets a childlike absurdity."



Betsy Rives *Waiting: Beach Breaks Chaff*, still from video, looped single channel video (2:20), 2010

Betsy Rives *Sleeping: Thirsty*, still from video, looped single channel video (2:00), 2011

MATEJ VAKULA

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If We Don't Have, You Won't Have Either!

"For five days a whole square in a city in the Czech Republic sunk into darkness. I shut down nice, shiny mast lights at the 'Náměstí Práce' (Square of the Work) in Zlín City. I did that because in the city in Slovakia where I come from, there are the same lights, but they never worked. I decided to embody a 'typical' Slovak trajectory of thinking: 'If I don't have, my neighbor won't have either!'"

The main conceptual layer of my intervention comments critically, but also with humor on Czech and Slovak relationships from a point of view of stereotypical Slovak thinking. It is an interrogation into discourse which took place before the division of Czechoslovakia, when both nations were squabbling.

I created this public intervention in cooperation with the Museum of Fine Arts in Zlín, Czech Republic, linking two cities: Zlín in Czech Republic and my home, Žilina City in Slovakia, which before the division of Czechoslovakia in 1993 belonged to one country."



Matej Vakula *If We Don't Have, You Won't Have Either!* (lights on), video documentation, dimensions variable, 2010
 Matej Vakula *If We Don't Have, You Won't Have Either!* (lights off), video documentation, dimensions variable, 2010

BAHAR YURUKOGLU

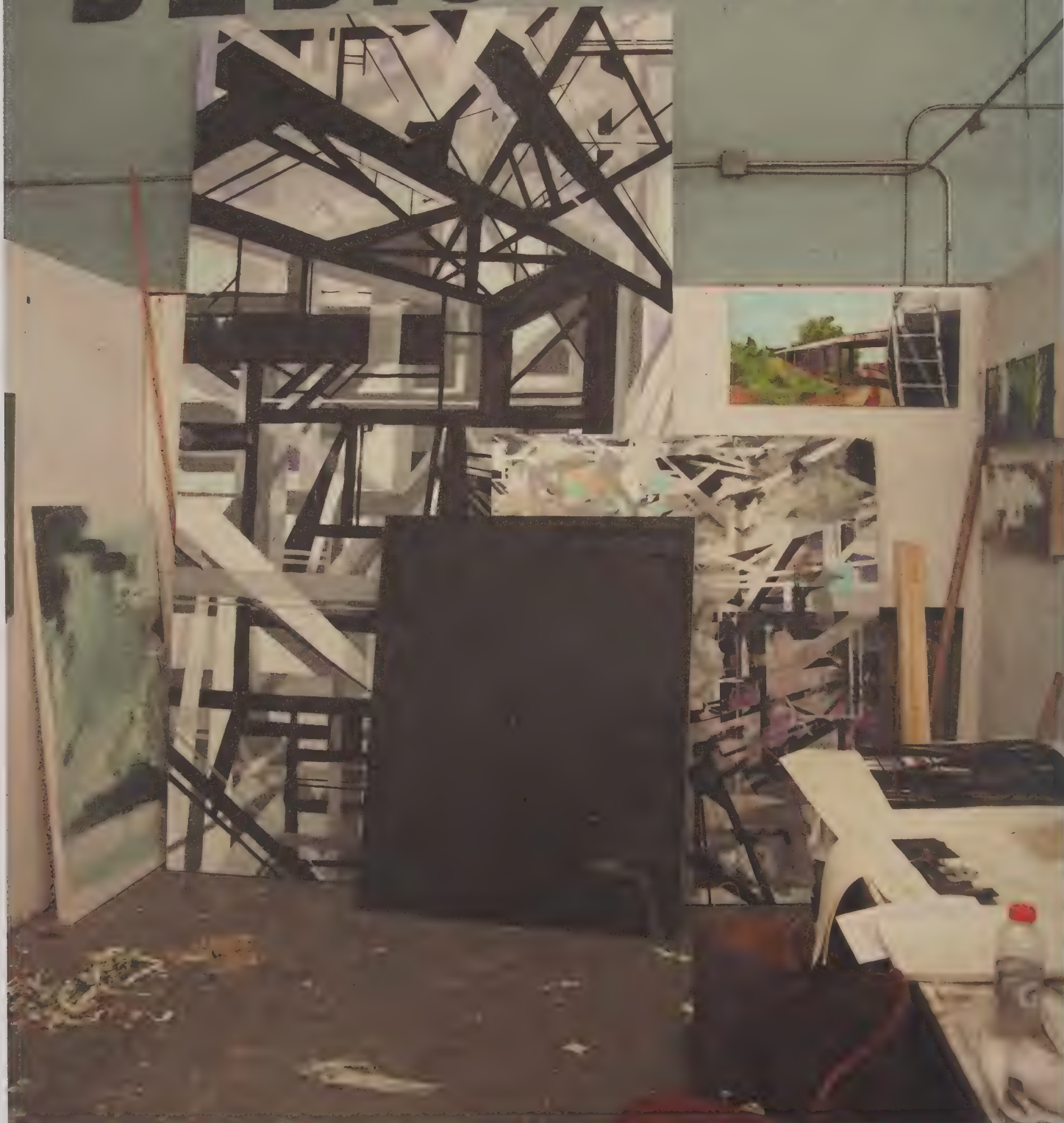
MFA STUDIO FOR INTERRELATED MEDIA

www.iambahar.combyuruk@me.comBahar Yurukoglu *Neo-Landscape II*, Archival Ink Jet Print, 20" x 16", 2011



Bahar Yurukoglu *Neo-Landscape I*, Archival Ink Jet Print, 16" x 20", 2011

DEDICATION



MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

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As an innovative university for artists, designers, and educators we prepare our students to contribute to contemporary culture and to fuel the creative economy. We are proud of our unique status as the only independent public college of art and design in the country, and our heritage as the nation's first degree-granting art school, founded in 1873.

Our programs are consistently ranked among the top in the country. US News & World Report ranked our MFA program #1 in Massachusetts. Our 1700 undergraduate and 200 graduate students come from more than 35 countries, reflecting the international reputation of our programs, and Boston's place as one of the great learning and research centers in the world. Our urban campus offers more than 1,000,000 square feet of studios, workshops, classrooms and galleries. We are located at the center of a world-class fine arts triangle, sited between the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Our Bakalar and Paine Galleries are one of Boston's premier venues for contemporary art, showcasing emerging and established artists from around the world.

Our 260 graduate and undergraduate faculty are teachers and artist/practitioners at the top of their fields, with a 9:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Our faculty exhibit nationally and internationally at institutions including: MoMA, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the J. Paul Getty Center Museum, the San Francisco Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, the International Center of Photography, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, the Victoria and Albert Museum (London), the Musee de la Ville de Paris, the Cleveland Institute of Art, and the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, among others. The faculties' cumulative awards and grants number in the thousands, including multiple awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Fulbright Program, the Andy Warhol Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation, the New York Foundation for the Arts, the New England Foundation for the Arts, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the MacDowell Colony Fellowship, and the Massachusetts Council on the Arts.

The university offers graduate degrees in eleven areas. For more information please visit MassArt.edu , email gradinfo@massart.edu, or call (617) 879-7166.

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